

As a talk show host of a radio program at Latina 1580 AM Radio, Mrs. Ramos gave community organizations and elected officials the opportunity to provide information and create awareness about important issues affecting the community.

I am happy to honor Wanda Ramos, during Hispanic Heritage Month, for her many accomplishments and her contributions to the Central Florida community.

#### RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTION OF CHAD M. BRANDT

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, to recognize Chad M. Brandt for his contributions to the Central Florida community. Mr. Brandt was born in Melbourne, Florida, in 1970. He is a first generation Cuban-American who has witnessed firsthand the challenges that immigrants face in the United States. He has dedicated his life and career to serve the cause of the immigrants in his community.

Mr. Brandt received a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Florida International University and a law degree from the University of Florida Levin College of Law, both with honors. He is currently a member of the Florida Bar, the American Immigration Lawyers Association, and admitted before the Florida Supreme Court and the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida.

Mr. Brandt is the owner and founder of Brandt Immigration, a law firm specialized in immigration law. He devotes a substantial portion of his immigration practice to deportation defense and representing individuals, families, and businesses during interviews and appearances before immigration officials. Additionally, Mr. Brandt assists clients in obtaining temporary visas and permanent resident status.

Mr. Brandt is also actively involved in his community. He is currently a board member of the statewide and the local chapter of the Hispanic Business Initiative Fund, a non-profit organization dedicated to assisting Hispanic entrepreneurs. He is also a member of the Hispanic Bar Association of Central Florida and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando. He has lectured on immigration law at the University of Florida Levin College of Law and his articles have been featured in the Orlando Sentinel and Ahora Magazine.

Mr. Brandt currently lives in Orlando, FL, with his wife, Jennifer, and his five children, Chad Jr., Emily, Ethan, Lily, and William.

I am happy to honor Chad Brandt, during Hispanic Heritage Month, for his service to the immigrant community in Central Florida.

#### INTRODUCING THE DEBT LIMIT REFORM ACT

### HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 15, 2013*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Debt Limit Reform Act. This bill will reform the statutory limits on our nation's federal debt by providing the President of the United States with explicit authority to raise the debt ceiling without Congressional approval, and by removing intragovernmental accounts from the debt ceiling calculation. As Congress faces an ongoing government shutdown that has left hundreds of thousands of American workers without a

paycheck, we are getting ever closer to our nation defaulting on its debt obligations. On October 17th, the debt ceiling is expected to be breached. Democrats and Republicans must come together before then to act or risk a global economic catastrophe. This is exactly where we were just two years ago, and where we will be again in the near future if we do not take any steps to reform the way in which we calculate and consider our nation's debt.

Congress has legislatively limited federal debt for nearly 100 years, from the Second Liberty Bond Act of 1917 to the more recent Budget Control Act of 2011 and subsequent increases. These increases, however, do not address the fact that the current manner in which we determine the debt ceiling is no longer relevant to how we govern today.

We need a new debt limit law—one that takes the modern world into account. Under this bill, the debt ceiling will distinguish between mere accounting techniques and actual debt. No longer will debt owed from one branch of our government to another be considered the same as debt held by foreign governments, banks, pension funds, and other entities. According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), of the \$16.699 trillion in outstanding debt subject to limit, roughly \$11.9 trillion is held by the public and about \$4.8 trillion is held by government accounts.

By excluding these government-held accounts from the debt limit calculation—particularly the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) and the Disability Insurance (DI) Trust Funds that constitute the Social Security Trust Funds, Medicare Parts A and B, the Civil Service and Military Retirement Trust Funds, Unemployment Insurance, the Highway Trust Fund, Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) Trust Fund, and Airport and Airway Trust Fund—we will have a more accurate view of our actual debt obligations.

These intra-governmental accounts are the means by which the Treasury tracks payouts and obligations to other government entities. They are accounting techniques, not debts. These funds serve to help retired workers and their families, the families of deceased workers, and disabled workers and their families. In addition, they provide inpatient hospital stay and medical insurance benefits; fund programs for civilian and military retirement; provide unemployment benefits to eligible workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own; fund road construction and mass transit projects; provide insurance for long-term services in the case of disability; and fund the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). They need not be considered the same as our government's debt for purposes of calculating the debt ceiling.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when partisan gridlock is having a devastating impact on our nation's economy through a government shutdown and further threatening to destabilize global financial systems, this legislation represents a common sense solution to modernizing the way in which we calculate our nation's debt and increase the debt ceiling. By excluding intragovernmental accounts from the Treasury's debt ceiling equation and authorizing the Executive to alter the ceiling as needed, the Debt Limit Reform Act will help Congress avoid some of the last-minute showdowns that have become all too common in recent years. In this way we can begin to tackle the real challenges facing this country.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 15, 2013*

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent during the week September 23, 2013. If I were present, I would have voted on the following:

Rollcall vote No. 484: H.R. 1961, "nay;"  
Rollcall vote No. 485: H. Res. 354, "yea;"  
Rollcall vote No. 486: H.R. 3095, "yea;"  
Rollcall vote No. 487: H.R. 2600, "yea;"  
Rollcall vote No. 488: Journal Vote, "yea;"  
Rollcall vote No. 489: Grijalva Amendment, "aye;"  
Rollcall vote No. 490: Napolitano Amendment, "aye;"  
Rollcall vote No. 491: Senate Amendment to H.R. 1412, "yea;"  
Rollcall vote No. 492: H.R. 3096, "aye;"  
Rollcall vote No. 493: H. Res. 361—Martial Law Authority Rule, "nay;"  
Rollcall vote No. 494: Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule, "nay;"  
Rollcall vote No. 495: H. Res. 366—Rule providing for consideration of both the amendments to the Senate Amendment to H.J. Res. 59, "nay;"  
Rollcall vote No. 496: H.R. 2251, "yea;"  
Rollcall vote No. 497: Motion to Concur with the Senate Amendment with a House Amendment, Part 1 (Paulsen), "yea;"  
Rollcall vote No. 498: Motion to Concur with the Senate Amendment with a House Amendment, Part 2 (Blackburn), "nay;"  
Rollcall vote No. 499: H.R. 3210—Pay Our Military Act, "yea;" and  
Rollcall vote No. 500: H.R. 2848—Department of State Operations and Embassy Security Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2014, "yea."

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 15, 2013*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, October 14, I missed a rollcall vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on No. 548.

#### HONORING JIM MURAKAMI OF SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA

### HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 15, 2013*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to posthumously honor and pay tribute to Jim Murakami, a great community leader who dedicated much of his life to advocating for the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which achieved redress for the 120,000 United States citizens of Japanese descent on the West Coast that were wrongfully incarcerated in internment camps during World War II.

Mr. Murakami was born and raised in Santa Rosa, California. When WWII broke out, Mr. Murakami and his family were first incarcerated in the temporary internment camp in